

Short-Term Scientific Missions

Open Calls

Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are designed to **support research visits** that foster and strengthen collaboration among scientists working on topics relevant to our Action EXPAND.

As flexible and inclusive networking activities, STSMs play a key role in:

- Supporting specific or cross-cutting research topics that contribute to achieving the objectives and deliverables defined in the Action MoU;
- Supporting capacity building and knowledge transfer through bilateral/multilateral collaborations;
- Establishing new collaborations or reinforce existing ones across disciplines with possible benefits for career development;
- Producing outcomes that enhance the visibility, impact, and outreach of the Action, while encouraging wider participation from the research community.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to join the Action. To become a member, please visit the Action webpage and select the Working Group(s) to which you wish to contribute.

How to apply to STSMs:

- **Create an Account:** The applicants must register for an active e-COST profile. To create a new account or to log in to your e-COST account, please visit this webpage.
- **Secure a Host:** It is the applicant's responsibility to choose and contact a Host Institution before applying.
- **Submit Online:** All applications must be submitted through the COST website. Select our Action CA24149, choose the STSMs call, and complete the online application form.
- **Application deadline:** Applications must be submitted no later than **5 April 2026 at 17:00 CET**.
- **Need help?** A Grant Awarding user guide is available here.

Required Documents and Information:

The following compulsory information and documents must be included in the online application:

- **Basic Mission Details (filled online):** Title, start and end dates, requested budget, information about the host institution, and the contact person.
- **STSM Application Form (document upload):** A specific template describing your goals, the work to be carried out, expected outcomes, and how the mission contributes to the Action MoU objectives. The template is available here.
- **Host Institution Agreement (document upload):** A written agreement (using the template available on e-COST) from the Host Institution confirming you can perform the activities detailed in your work plan on the agreed dates.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicants must be affiliated with an institution located in a COST Member Country or a Near Neighbour Country (see the COST website for the list of eligible countries).
- The host institution must be located in a country different from that of the applicant's primary affiliation.
- The minimum duration of the STSM is five working days.
- Under the present call, scientific visits must start no earlier than 1 June 2026 and end no later than 31 October 2026.

- Scientific relevance to the Action: Applications must demonstrate clear relevance to the objectives of the network. The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet the required scientific standards, even if sufficient budget is available.

Evaluation procedure and selection of applicants:

Applications will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee (EC), composed of eight members of the Action: Fabio Bacchini, Frederico Fiuza, Krzysztof Nalewajko, Joonas Nätilä, Oliver Porth, Brian Reville, Arno Vanthieghem, and Marija Vranic. The Committee is chaired by the Grant Awarding Coordinator, Anna Grassi. Each application will be assessed independently by two members of the EC. The preliminary ranking will subsequently be reviewed to ensure appropriate balance with respect to gender, inclusiveness, and participation from Inclusiveness Target Countries.

To avoid conflicts of interest, members of the EC must abstain from evaluating any application in which they have a direct professional connection with the applicant (e.g., supervisor–student relationship), if they are the proposed host of the visit, or if they are themselves the applicant.

Successful applicants will be notified by email at the beginning of May 2026, except in the case of unforeseen delays. The final list of selected projects will be published on the Action website by mid-May 2026.

Financial support:

Financial support will be provided as a lump sum to cover travel and/or subsistence expenses. Please note that STSM grants may not cover all costs associated with the mission. Successful applicants are responsible for arranging their own travel and accommodation.

Grant recipients must submit a scientific report within **30 days after the end of the visit** or **15 days after the end of the Grant Period (31 October 2026)**, whichever comes first. Payment will be made only after the report has been approved.

In accordance with COST rules, the grant amount will not exceed **€4,000** and will depend on the duration of the visit. The Evaluation Committee may approve an application with a reduced budget. Applicants may estimate the grant amount using the daily rates for accommodation, meals, and local transport provided in the official [COST table](#).